REMARKS

This Amendment is fully responsive to the final Office Action dated March 16, 2009, issued in connection with the above-identified application. Claims 1-5, 7-10 and 12-15 are pending in the present application. With this Amendment, claims 1, 2, 7, 8 and 10 have been amended. No new matter has been introduced by the amendments made to the claims. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 1-5, 7-10 and 12-15 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hattori et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2002/0065693, hereafter "Hattori"). The Applicants have amended independent claims 1, 7 and 8 to help further distinguish the present invention from the cited prior art. Independent claim 1 (as amended) recites the following features:

"[a]n information processing apparatus which comprises a processor and an information notification apparatus, and is embodied in one of a portable generic computer, a Personal Digital Assistant and a cellular phone, said information notification apparatus comprising:

a rule holding unit operable to hold (a) an information notification rule which is generated based on information concerning a preference of a specific user, the rule defining that predetermined information should be notified to the specific user in the case where the specific user satisfies a predetermined condition and (b) an information notification rule which is generated based on information concerning a preference of an other user;

an information notification unit operable to notify the specific user of predetermined information which needs to be notified to the other user, in the case where a condition which is defined by the information notification rule concerning the other user is satisfied by the specific user; and

a behavior determination unit operable to determine whether or not the specific user who received the notified information has behaved in a manner indicated in the notified information, based on one of an input received from the specific user and data related to the notified information, and send a notification to said information notification unit of a result of the determination,

wherein said information notification unit is operable to receive the notification from said

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behavior determination unit, and notify the specific user and the other user of information including a message positively asserting that the specific user who received the notified information did not behave in the manner indicated in the notified information in the case where the result of the determination indicated in the notification shows that the specific user did not behave in the manner indicated in the notified information."

The features noted above in independent claim 1 are similarly recited in independent claims 7 and 8. Specifically, independent claim 7 is directed to a corresponding method and claim 8 is directed to a corresponding computer program, and both claims recite steps directed to the features of the apparatus of claim 1. Additionally, the features noted above in independent claim 1 (and similarly recited in independent claims 7 and 8) are fully supported by the Applicants' disclosure.

The present invention (as recited in independent claims 1, 7 and 8) is distinguishable over the cited prior art in that an information notification rule is applied to each of a specific user and an other user; and a notification is sent to the other user of the fact that a predetermined condition according to the information notification rule has been satisfied.

In the Office Action, the Examiner relies on Hattori for disclosing or suggesting all the features of independent claims 1, 7 and 8. However, the Applicants assert that Hattori fails to disclose or suggest all the features recited in independent claims 1, 7 and 8, as amended.

In Hattori, agents for individual users manage a purchase memo shared among the respective users. As described in Hattori, when a user comes close to a store where a product indicated in the shared purchase memo is on sale, each agent issues a notification to urge the user to purchase the product based on the shared purchase memo.

The users who can access the shared purchase memo can add and delete a desired product in the shared purchase memo. The respective users can avoid double purchasing of a product because they can find out the product to be purchased by checking the shared purchase memo, and after the purchase of the product, a purchase history is kept in a log.

The present invention (as recited in independent claims 1, 7 and 8) is distinguishable over Hattori for at least the reasons noted below.

In Hattori, a message indicating that a specific user who received notified information did

not behave in a manner indicated in the notified information is kept as a POS purchase log or the like, and the respective users can check the purchase log. In the Office Action, the Examiner appears to conclude that the above feature disclosed in Hattori allows obtainment of a notification explicitly indicating that the specific user who received notified information did not behave in the manner indicated in the notified information.

However, in Hattori, history of "already purchased" or "not yet purchased" and a shared purchase list for purchase check is available only when the user accesses the history and the shared purchase list. The history and the shared purchase list are not updated unless a change occurs in the data included in the history and shared purchase list. In other words, in Hattori, the history and the shared purchase list are not updated until a purchase event occurs. Therefore, Hattori does not allow the respective users to be notified of the fact that a desired product has not yet been purchased.

In contrast, the information processing apparatus according to the present invention includes the following unique elements: a behavior determination unit (or step) which determines whether or not a desired product has already been purchased; and an information notification unit (or step) that notifies the determination result to the other user. Thus, even when the specific user who received the notification does not purchase the desired product, the status of "not yet purchased" can be reliably determined. The above features of the present invention (as similarly recited in independent claims 1, 7 and 8) are neither disclosed nor suggested by Hattori.

Finally, the Examiner alleges that a message notified by the behavior determination unit or step when a desired product has not yet been purchased (as in the present application) is equivalent to a purchase log disclosed in Hattori. However, Hattori does not disclose or suggest actions to be taken after the specific user who received such notification does not make a purchase. For example, when a specific user who received the notification has not yet purchased the desired product, to send a specific user a reminder message and to send the other user a message indicating that the desired product has not yet been purchased.

Therefore, Hattori fails to disclose or suggest at the following features of independent claim 1 (and similarly recited in independent claims 7 and 8):

"wherein said information notification unit is operable to receive the notification from said

behavior determination unit, and notify the specific user and the other user of information including a message positively asserting that the specific user who received the notified information did not behave in the manner indicated in the notified information in the case where the result of the determination indicated in the notification shows that the specific user did not behave in the manner indicated in the notified information."

Based on the above discussion, independent claims 1, 7 and 8 (as amended) are not anticipated or rendered obvious by Hattori. Likewise, claims 2-5, 9, 10 and 12-15 are not anticipated or rendered obvious at least by virtue of their respective dependencies from independent claim 1.

In light of the above, the Applicants respectfully submit that all the pending claims are patentable over the prior art of record. The Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections presented in the outstanding Office Action, and pass the present application to issue. Should the Examiner believe there are any remaining issues that must be resolved before this application can be passed to issue, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned by telephone in order to resolve such issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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By 2009.06.15 14:38:20 -04'00'

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